

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5

1. A method for secure password entry, comprising:

displaying a password prompt comprising a changing stream of random characters,  
wherein a particular character within said changing stream of random characters is displayed at a  
10 visibly detectable higher frequency; and

receiving input to increment or decrement said particular character to reach a password  
character of a password.

- 15 2. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

displaying a plurality of character positions, wherein a stream of random characters is  
displayed in each of said plurality of character positions, wherein a particular position from  
among said plurality of character positions provides said password prompt.

20

3. The method according to claim 2 for secure password entry, further comprising:

adjusting which character position from among said plurality of character positions  
provides said password prompt.

25

4. The method according to claim 2 for secure password entry, further comprising:

adjusting a number of said plurality of character positions.

5. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

responsive to receiving input of a password completion character indicating that said  
5 password is complete, securely passing said password to a requesting software layer.

6. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

responsive to receiving a request for a password from a software layer within a data  
10 processing system, invoking a password entry controller from within said data processing system,  
wherein said password entry controller controls said displaying said password prompt and said  
receiving input to increment or decrement said particular character.

7. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

15 responsive to receiving, at a client system, a request for a password entry from a server  
system from which said client system is attempting to access a resource, invoking a password  
entry controller from within said data processing system, wherein said password entry controller  
controls said displaying said password prompt and said receiving input to increment or  
20 decrement said particular character.

8. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

generating said stream of random characters, wherein said particular character is  
25 randomly selected.

9. The method according to claim 1 for secure password entry, further comprising:

adjusting a frequency percentage at which said particular character is displayed in said stream of random characters.

10. A system for secure password entry, comprising:

5

a data processing system for controlling a display interface;

said data processing system further comprising:

10 means for displaying a password prompt comprising a changing stream of random characters within said display interface, wherein a particular character within said changing stream of random characters is displayed at a visibly detectable higher frequency; and

15 means for receiving input at said data processing system to increment or decrement said particular character to reach a password character of a password.

11. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

20 means for displaying a plurality of character positions, wherein a stream of random characters is displayed in each of said plurality of character positions, wherein a particular position from among said plurality of character positions provides said password prompt; and

12. The system according to claim 11 for secure password entry, further comprising:

25 means for adjusting which character position from among said plurality of character positions provides said password prompt.

13. The system according to claim 11 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means for adjusting a number of said plurality of character positions.

5 14. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means, responsive to receiving input of a password completion character indicating that said password is complete, for securely passing said password to a requesting software layer.

10 15. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

a password entry controller executing within said data processing system for controlling said means for display said password prompt and said means for receiving input at said data processing system; and

15

means, responsive to receiving a request for a password from a software layer within a data processing system, for invoking said password entry controller.

16. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

20

a password entry controller for controlling said means for display said password prompt and said means for receiving input at said data processing system; and

means, responsive to receiving a request for a password from a server system from which  
25 said data processing system is attempting to accessing a resource, for invoking said password entry controller.

17. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means for generating said string of random characters, wherein said particular character is randomly selected.

5

18. The system according to claim 10 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means for adjusting a frequency percentage at which said particular character is displayed in said stream of random characters.

10

19. A computer program product, residing on a computer readable medium, for secure password entry, comprising:

means for displaying a password prompt comprising a changing stream of random characters, wherein a particular character within said changing stream of random characters is displayed at a visibly detectable higher frequency; and

15

means for receiving input to increment or decrement said particular character to reach a password character of a password.

20

20. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means for displaying a plurality of character positions, wherein a stream of random characters is displayed in each of said plurality of character positions, wherein a particular position from among said plurality of character positions provides said password prompt; and

25

21. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

5 means for adjusting which character position from among said plurality of character positions provides said password prompt.

22. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

10 means for adjusting a number of said plurality of character positions.

23. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

15 means, responsive to receiving input of a password completion character indicating that said password is complete, for securely passing said password to a requesting software layer.

24. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

20 means for generating said stream of random characters, wherein said particular character is randomly selected.

25

25. The computer program product according to claim 19 for secure password entry, further comprising:

means for adjusting a frequency percentage at which said particular character is displayed  
5 in said stream of random characters.